

Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCCT-01

DHA-02 AID-05 CCO-00 OC-05 OPR-02 USSS-00 SCA-01 A-01

OMB-01 SY-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SCS-03

FBO-02 IO-11 /102 W

----- 008185

O 141950Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9011

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILII, LE

SUBJ: SITUATION AS OF 2000 HOURS MAR 14; MUCH

MOTION, NO PROGRESS

1. INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE THROUGH OUT MAR.
14 IN EFFORT RESOLVE CRISIS OVER PRESIDENCY. RUMORS ARE ABOUND.
ONLY POINT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR IS THAT FRANGIE HAS NOT
BUDGED FROM HIS FLAT REFUSAL TO STEP DOWN. MARONITE PAT-
RIARCH KREISH HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BOTH FRANGIE AND PIERRE
GEMAYEL; KREISH'S ADVACE IS NOT KNOWN, BUT IT IS BELIEVED
HE SIMPLY URGED POSITION THAT WOULD SAVE THE COUNTRY FROM
CHAOS. IMAM MUSA SADR EXPECTED ISSUE STATEMENT EVENING

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MAR 14 BACKING GEN AL-AHDAB.

2. KATAEB PARTY POLITBURO IN ALMOST CONTINUOUS SESSION. EMBOFF TOLD BY SOURCE CLOSE TO KATAEB THAT PARTY MIGHT BE PREPARED GO ALONG WITH AL-AHDAB'S COUP PROVIDED THEY GET ASSURANCE SETTLEMENT INVOLVING FRANGIE OUSTER IS SETTLEMENT THAT WILL STICK. THIS SOURCE CHARACTERIZED PROBLEM AS LIKELY TAKE DAYS TO RESOLVE, NOT HOURS, BUT HE WAS NOT RPT NOT PESSIMISTIC. WE UNDERSTAND FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT KATAEB REP CONFERRED WITH AL-AHDAB MAR 14, AND THAT CHAMOUN AND KATAEB REP HAVE TALK TO ARMY COMMAND. SOME WHAT CONTRADICTION NOTE, HOWEVER, IS ITEM ON KATAEB CLANDESTINE RADIO LATE MAR 14 THAT POLITBURO HAD JUST VOTED FOR "LEGALITY".

3. ABOUT MID DAY MAR 14 COUP LEADERSHIP ISSUED "COMMUNIQUE NO. 10" ASKING PARLIAMENT TO "CONSECRATE" OUSTER OF PRESIDENT AND ELECT SUCCESSOR. REACTION IN PARLIAMENT AS YET UNKNOWN. DEPUTIES STILL SEARCHING FRANTICALLY FOR FORMULA TO BREAK DEAD LOCK.

4. PRO COUP RADIO AND TV MAR 14 BROADCAST TELEGRAMS ALLEGEDLY ADDRESS TO AL-AHDAB FROM SAUDI KING KHALID AND AMIR SULTAN, SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE; THOUGH MERELY RESPONDING TO PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY. TELEGRAMS SENT EARLIER BY AL-AHDAB, THESE MESSAGES RAISING EYEBROWS HERE AS IMPLYING SAUDI APPROVAL OF COUP.

5. SECURITY PICTURE IN BEIRUT ANARCHIC THOUGH AS FAR AS WE AWARE NOT YET MARKED BY SUSTAINED PITCHED BATTLES. ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, LEFTISTS MILITIAS MAR 14 OCCUPIED SERAIL INCLUDING PREMIER'S OFFICE THERE. LT KHATIB'S DISSIDENT FORCE SAID TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS ACTION, TO WHICH THERE HAS BEEN NO KNOWN REACTION FROM COUP LEADERSHIP. RIGHTISTS AND MODERATES BECOMING INCREASINGLY UNEASY ABOUT KHATIB, AND ABOUT KEMAL JUMBLATT'S RELATION TO HIM. JUMBLATT REPORTEDLY HAS MADE STATEMENT THAT AIM OF LEFTISTS IS "TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM". JUMBLATT, KATAEB AND NASSERITE IMBRAHIM QULAYLAT MEET AT TOWN OF CHTOURA MAR 13, AT WHICH TIME KATAEB REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED HE WOULD JOIN AL-AHDAB IF ARMY COMMAND INCLUDES HIS REPRESENTATIVES.

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6. DATT HAS LEARN THAT TROOPS GUARDING PALACE (EXCLUSIVE OF ANY ZGHORTA IRREGULARS) NUMBER ONLY ABOUT 300. THEY HAVE STAGHOUND ARMORED CARS WITH SMALL GUNS, 4 M42 TRACK VEHICLES WITH TWIN 40MM GUNS SOME FRENCH "MILAN" ANTI TANK MISSILE AND 4 57MM ANTI AIRCRAFT GUNS WITHOUT AMMUNITION. SIZE OF NEARBY FORCE UNDER PRO-FRANGIE COL BARAKAT PUT AT 2 STAGHOUNDS AND 18 MEN, NOT MUCH OF THREAT TO AL-AHDAB. RUMOR THAT SARBA CASERNE

AT JOUNIEH HAD JOINED BARAKAT APPERANTLY UNTRUE.
LAMBRAKIS

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